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("on-time") pupils, and the over-aged ("retarded") are poorest. (4) Spelling ability acquired in drill or column method is transferable to the spelling in composition.

The study seems to the writer inadequate to answer the questions raised in anything more than a tentative way, and therefore, insufficient grounds on which to base practice in the schools. The author of the study evidently held rather dogmatically to the view that drill is a *sine qua non* in acquiring spelling, consequently, the study "proves" this thesis. The more important question of *locus* or place for emphasis upon formal spelling drill is not answered, either for grade or age. In the nature of the tests very little can be judged, in spite of the author's conclusions, as to the transferability of a particular skill, because, for one thing, the essential element used in the two methods is identical in the procedures, the words in both cases being dictated for the child to write. Mr. Wallin seems to have read more into the proposition of *transfer* from general psychological and physiological considerations of habit formation than he did from the specific study.

As a tentative study, preliminary to further investigation along this line, the work is of great value in the control of educational practice.

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### ENGLISH TAUGHT INDUCTIVELY

There is probably no teacher of English who would deny that the elementary schools fall short of accomplishing what should be their purpose, to give every pupil passing through them a working command of his most important tool, the English language. "The American voice" and slovenly habits of speech have been accepted as inevitable. The complaints from the business world and the secondary schools are too well known to need repetition. There are few, if any, other lines of work in which similarly faulty products would not have forced, long ago, a change of method in production. With a language flexible and growing we have used a method of instruction rigid and without growth.

We have seen in the natural sciences the result of the laboratory method, with its hypotheses and experiments. May not these be incorporated in the elementary teaching of English? Let the child learn to speak correctly while speaking of the things which possess a natural interest for him. Let him learn to write by much writing.

Let him derive from his own experiments the principles which govern the correct use of the language.

It would be no more unreasonable to expect a child to perform correctly upon the piano without hours of patient practice, of technical instruction, than it is to expect a well-modulated voice and distinct enunciation without frequent periods of systematic drill and conscious effort.

The schools aim to develop a love of literature, but all teachers have seen masterpieces dissected to furnish examples of peculiar construction. Poems which should have sung themselves into the heart have been used to illustrate technical grammar, whose only use in an elementary school should be to test and correct habits of speech.

The English teacher who is breaking away from traditional methods and looking about for a guide can find it in the Cabell-Freeman series of books on English,<sup>1</sup> which have been adopted by the Chicago Board of Education. They are texts to be placed in the hands of the children. Book I is for the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, Book II for the seventh and eighth. In both the emphasis is placed on oral language. They are almost exhaustless fields of material, not only because of what they offer teachers and pupils in the books themselves but also because of possibilities they suggest outside of their covers.

Book I contains well-organized work to secure breath control, proper tone production, and elasticity of the organs involved in speech. The power so gained is directly applied to the material for oral expression. Science, art, and literature furnish topics for discussion; and so carefully have the authors made their selections that children gladly claim them as their own.

Book II continues the activities started in Book I. There is a logical sequence in the work. Here technical grammar has taken the position of shedding light instead of requiring it.

The recurrence of the autumnal theme marks the beginning of each grade's work. At first, it seemed a flaw that the work for the various grades was not definitely divided into distinct sections. This, in use, has proved to be an advantage, as it is possible to go without friction or explanation to any part of the book, according to the need of the class.

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<sup>1</sup> *English*, Books I and II. By ELVIRA D. CABELL and VIRGINIA W. FREEMAN. Chicago: William F. Roberts Co., 1911.